



CITY OF BOSTON • THOMAS M. MENINO, MAYOR

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Boston Redevelopment Authority • Mark Maloney, Director

DOWNTOWN CROSSING ECONOMIC IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVE

SPRING 2006

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Mayor Thomas M. Menino at the Ultra Diamonds' opening in December

2005 In Review

In November 2004, Mayor Thomas M. Menino announced the Downtown Crossing Economic Improvement Initiative. With this announcement, Mayor Menino has given high priority to the physical upgrade of Downtown Crossing.

Mayor Menino envisions Downtown Crossing becoming a more vibrant, unified District with a greater variety in the types of retailers, which will result in increased economic vitality. This initiative is a private/public partnership, which is being led by the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA). A total of \$900,000 is necessary to accomplish the revitalization efforts. The City has committed \$500,000, which will come out of the City's capital budget, and the remaining \$400,000 will be fund raised through contributions from building owners and retailers.

Throughout 2005, numerous City agencies, including the Boston Transportation Department (BTD), Boston Police Department (BPD), Inspectional Services Department (ISD), Public Works Department (PWD), and Basic City Services Department worked together to ensure that physical upgrades occurred and that existing vehicular traffic regulations are enforced. Since the initiative's inception, a streetscape improvement plan has been established and implemented. Sidewalk and streets have been repaired, and new trash receptacles and acorn lights have been installed. During spring 2005, flower baskets and *Faces of Downtown Crossing* banners were hung on the light poles throughout Downtown Crossing and the Ladder District streets. Project Place, a non-profit organization located in the South End that assists homeless and low-income citizens, was hired to clean the sidewalks and streets in the District five days a week.

During the 2005 holiday season, festive decorations and winter banners were installed along the light poles on Washington, Winter and Summer Streets. BRA staff, with the help of the Downtown Crossing Association, decorated the holiday trees with colorful purple and silver ornaments. Over 1000 gift bags filled with coupons to Downtown Crossing retail stores and restaurants were distributed to shoppers to encourage even more shopping.

This past holiday season marked the 1st Annual Downtown Crossing Holiday Windows Sparkle Contest, sponsored by Mayor Thomas M. Menino and the BRA. Retailers in Downtown Crossing and the City joined together to make the District the place for holiday shopping.

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Downtown Crossing Retail Update



The very hip Minneapolis based clothier, Kuhlman Company (www.kuhlmancompany.com) has signed a lease at 41 Winter Street in Downtown Crossing. The 650 square foot space, formerly a jewelry co-op, is currently being renovated and is slated to open in early spring 2006. This will be the company's second location in Boston, joining their sister store at the Pru.



Kuhlman sells European crafted clothing and accessories for both men and women. They market their stylish and versatile wares as *"luxury... for everyone, democratic to the core"*. Their hip styles and sleek store interior will energize the Winter Street retail experience and serve as a destination for the many commuters who pass by each day.

2005 was an active year for new retailers joining the mix in Downtown Crossing. Lafayette Center is leasing up with the additions of Expressions, KnowFat! Life Style Grill, and Quizno's Subs. Casual Male and Wet Seal re-opened in the District. Ruth's Chris Steak House and Ivy added to the restaurant offerings. Chacarero found a new permanent home on Province Street. Winter Street comes alive at night thanks to the salsa spot, Mojitos Lounge. The District is sparkling even more with the additions of Ultra Diamonds, So Good Jewelry and Skylight Jewelers. Whippoorwill Gallery, on Franklin Street, and Elizabeth Grady, located in Winthrop Square, both opened in late 2005 on the edge of the Financial District. 2006 is already shaping up to be a busy year in the Crossing with many more retailers due to open soon.

Shoppers' Park MBTA Head House Gets A New Look

During the fall of 2005, the MBTA painted the glass canopy structure on the Orange Line Head House located in Shoppers' Park, next to Filene's. The canopy structure was originally green and is now black. The masonry was also repaired and pigeon deterrent devices were installed. Pigeon droppings were removed. Many thanks to the MBTA for working with the City.



Improved MBTA headhouse



Filene's Basement: Here to Stay

On the "must see" list for many tourists and visitors is Filene's Basement. This historic bargain basement has been a Boston tradition for nearly 100 years, and plans to remain in the Downtown Crossing location.

Located in the basement of a 656,000 square foot building currently occupied by Filene's at 426 Washington Street, the store is increasing advertising and signage to let consumers know that Filene's Basement has a secure future in Downtown Crossing, holding a long term lease on the property.



Currently planning for its centennial celebration, Filene's Basement was created in 1908 by Edward A. Filene, the son of the owner of Filene's Department Store. As a way to sell the department store's overstock, Edward A. Filene opened the basement. Filene's Basement officially became its own entity in 1987. Filene's Basement is considered by many to be the first modern off-price discount store in history.

Federated Department Stores completed its acquisition of the May Department Stores (the former owners of Filene's) on August 30, 2005, reuniting Federated and Filene's. On February 1, 2006 the Filene's organization was dissolved and the management of its stores was assumed by Macy's East. By fall 2006, the Filene's name and brand will be phased out as Federated will convert Filene's to the Macy's masthead. The landmark flagship Filene's Department Store at Downtown Crossing will close and be consolidated across the street into the existing Macy's store. Filene's, which has occupied the Washington Street building since 1881, began a going out of business sale on Sunday, January 22, 2006.

The Filene's building, built in 1912 and placed on the national register of historic places in 1986, is for sale. Federated Department Stores, which issued a request for proposals in the fall of 2005, has not yet announced a developer for the site.



Filene's Building

The sale of the historic Filene's building is bittersweet for Downtown Crossing. While the conversion of Filene's has the potential to breathe new life into Downtown Crossing, it is an end of an era. Many Bostonians have fond memories and anecdotes about their experiences at Filene's and are sad that Filene's will be closing its doors forever.

Mayor Thomas M. Menino and the City are very interested in what happens to the Filene's building. No matter what the final program ends up being, the City will ensure that the ground-floor, especially along Washington Street/Summer Street, and possibly the 2nd and 3rd floors, will continue to be active retail and vibrant, enlivening the pedestrian experience.

THE BASEMENT

Did you know that...

Downtown Crossing was originally a residential district during colonial times, but by the 1850's commercial uses began to appear.

Spring Lane, off of Washington Street was named after The Great Spring, which was the main fresh water source for the area.

Three of the sixteen sites on Boston's Freedom Trail, the Old State House, the Old Corner Bookstore, and the Old South Church, are located on Washington Street.

The intersection at Washington, Winter and Summer Streets, which is known as the "100% Corner", is the busiest pedestrian crossing in all of New England. Over 100,000 people pass through the "100% Corner" each day.

There is approximately 1.8 million square feet of retail space in the district.

There are over 200 jewelry stores in Downtown Crossing and 93 eating and drinking establishments.

New Public Toilets And Bus Shelter

Wall USA, a street furniture company, has identified two locations for public toilets and a bus shelter in Downtown Crossing. The public toilets are slated for installation at the corner of Washington and School Streets, and on Franklin Street, across from Shoppers' Park. The bus shelter will also be located on Franklin Street, where the present bus stop is located. Wall



Proposed Wall toilet

USA has installed numerous bus shelters, informational panels and telephone pillars throughout the City, as well as other public toilets. Wall USA hopes to install additional street furniture in Downtown Crossing.

According to Peter O'Sullivan, Project Director, Street Furniture Project, Office of the Mayor, engineers are examining the proposed Downtown Crossing sites, to ensure that the toilets and bus shelter will not interfere with the underground utilities. If all goes as planned, the two new toilets and bus shelter could be operable by June. For safety reasons, the toilets will lock at a set time at night and will reopen in the morning. This is great news for shoppers and visitors in the District who are often looking for public restrooms!

2005 In Review *continued from page 1*

All retailers in the area were invited to participate in the contest, which involved decorating storefront windows. The contest was a great success! Over 20 retailers participated and shoppers voted for their favorite holiday windows by logging onto Boston.com. Boston.com enthusiastically participated in this contest.

A panel of judges rated each of the participating retailers' windows. Over 600 people cast their votes on Boston.com for the Shoppers' Choice Awards. The winners were:



London Harness' window submission

Shoppers' Choice/Large Retailer: Filene's
Shoppers' Choice/Independent Retailer:
Long's Jewelers
Juried Choice/Large Retailer: Grand
Winner, tie: Filene's and Macy's
Juried Choice Runner Up, tie: Tello's
and Pink
Independent Retailer: Grand Winner, tie:
London Harness and Long's Jewelers
Independent Retailer Runner Up:
Windsor Button

Winners of the contest were invited to a breakfast with Mayor Thomas M. Menino, which was held on March 3 at the Hyatt in Downtown Crossing. The Mayor and the BRA are looking forward to the 2nd Annual Downtown Crossing Holiday Windows Sparkle Contest. This holiday season, we would like to have buildings decorated as well. If you have any ideas or suggestions about how to improve the contest, please share them with us!

Summer 2006 In Downtown Crossing

To mark the beginning of summer 2006 in the Downtown Crossing, the colorful hanging pots in the Crossing will reappear at the beginning of June. The pots will again be paired with the *Faces of Downtown Crossing* banners, which will replace the purple and silver snowflake banners that made their debut over the 2005 holiday season. The plan for this year's plantings include a colorful variety of annual plants to add to the vibrant red geraniums of 2005.

Summer 2006 plantings in sunny locations will include red and yellow bi-color lantana, sky blue surfina, orange profusion zinnia, and dark purple petunia, along with the return of the red geraniums. A similar color palette will be used for hanging pots in shady locations; plantings will include lime green coleus, creeping jenny vines, purple torenia, and red trailing impatiens. These combinations of plants should provide a more lively mix all along the streets of the Downtown Crossing District.



Coming this summer – colorful plantings in Shoppers' Park

As a compliment to the hanging pots, the 2006 plan also includes ground level plantings, which will include similar annuals, in Shoppers' Park, Readers' Park, and the Old State House Plaza.

Other planned improvements include the placement of 38 new and updated historic trash receptacles and benches throughout the District.

Free Graffiti Removal Graffiti Busters

The City of Boston has a team called the "Graffiti Busters" that will remove graffiti from the exterior of your building at no expense. This service is offered by the City's Basic City Services Department. Graffiti Busters have removed graffiti from over 100,000 buildings throughout Boston.

If you are interested in having graffiti removed, a release form must be signed by the building's owner and filed with the City of Boston's Property Management Department, located at Boston City Hall. For more information call the City of Boston's Property Management Department at 617. 635.4100, or visit www.cityofboston.gov/graffitibusters/pdfs/graffiti.pdf to download the release form.



How To Obtain A Sign Permit

ALL SIGNS REQUIRE A PERMIT. Signage rules and regulations of all signs are governed by what is called ARTICLE 11 of the Boston Zoning Code (Signage Code).

STEP 1:

Apply for a permit by filling out an application at the City's Inspectional Services Department (ISD), 1010 Massachusetts Avenue, 5th floor, Counter 1, Boston, MA, for a sign permit.

STEP 2:

If the sign meets all of the zoning regulations it will be approved and the applicant will be able to pick up the permit for the installation of the sign.

If the application is rejected for not complying with the Signage Code, the applicant has two options:

OPTION A: BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (BRA) COMPREHENSIVE SIGN DESIGN REVIEW

Contact David Carlson, *Senior Architect*, BRA, 9th floor, Boston City Hall, 617.918.4284, to schedule a design review meeting with a member of the BRA's Urban Design staff.

OPTION B: ZONING BOARD OF APPEAL (ZBA) AND BRA COMPREHENSIVE SIGN DESIGN REVIEW

Apply for an appeal by obtaining an appeal form at ISD, 1010 Massachusetts Avenue, 5th fl, Counter 1.

The applicant will receive a hearing date. Hearings are held in Room 801, 8th floor of Boston City Hall. At the ZBA hearing, the applicant's appeal for his/her sign will be approved, denied or deferred to a later hearing.

If the appeal is approved, the applicant will then work with a member of the BRA's Urban Design staff who will review the sign's design.

Contact David Carlson, Senior Architect, BRA, 9th floor, Boston City Hall, 617.918.4284, to schedule a design review meeting with a member of the BRA's Urban Design staff.

For more information on signage and the process of obtaining a permit, visit:
<http://www.cityofboston.gov/bra/pdf/publications//DowntownCrossingSignageRegulations.pdf>

Signage In Downtown Crossing

As part of our initiative in the Downtown Crossing area, the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) is stepping up efforts to review and approve signage that is contributory to the area. Sandwich board signs are not allowed on sidewalks. Temporary signage (plastic banners) needs to be approved by the Inspectional Services Department (ISD) and should only be on a building for a very short amount of time. Paper window signs are **STRONGLY** discouraged. Also, permanent advertising signs located on the glass inside of a window can only occupy up to 30% of the total glass area of the window and cannot be illuminated and must be included in calculating the total area of signage.

We are encouraging signs that are attractive upgrades and that fit with the architecture of the building. Where that has been obscured in the past, The City and the BRA will work with business owners and property owners to remove such attachments and restore the original beauty and transparency of the architectural retail framework. Signs that are inventive or creative are especially encouraged.

Examples of creative signage include the Finagle-a-Bagel steaming bagel sign at the corner of Winter and Tremont Streets, the Whippoorwill sign at the corner of Devonshire and Franklin Streets, and the Starbucks sign at the corner of Merchants Row and State Street. Other newly approved signage includes So Good Jewelry at the corner of Winter and Washington Streets and Ivy on West Street.



The approval process for signage is not difficult in its essentials. The BRA, which is located on the 9th floor of City Hall, reviews signage informally and approves proposed signs. The BRA-stamped drawings are taken to ISD at 1010 Massachusetts Avenue, which is the City's agency that issues permits. For a bracket or blade sign, or canopy which overhangs the sidewalk, a license from the Public Works Department will also be required. The Public Works Department is located on the 7th floor of City Hall.

Vehicular Regulations

In the summer of 2005, it became evident that increased enforcement of the existing Downtown Crossing vehicular rules and regulations was necessary. Numerous motorists were in violation of the regulations. Downtown Crossing is a pedestrian mall and vehicles are only permitted to drive, park and unload on Washington Street during certain hours.

As of September 1, 2005, District A-1 Boston Police and the Boston Transportation Department (BTD) began enforcing the vehicular regulations for Downtown Crossing. Enforcement of the regulations will help reestablish the area as a pedestrian mall.

The following are the Downtown Crossing Vehicular Regulations. If you are not already familiar with the rules, please take a moment to review them. Your cooperation in following these regulations is greatly appreciated.

DOWNTOWN CROSSING VEHICULAR REGULATIONS

1. Commercial vehicles with proper identification and commercial plates* are allowed to load/unload anytime on the following streets:

- Hawley Street
- Summer Street, between Hawley Street and Otis Street (provided the posted regulations are adhered to)
- Bromfield Street, between Province Street and Tremont Street (access via Province Street ONLY)

2. Vehicles with commercial plates* are allowed on the following streets between 6PM and 11AM ONLY:

- Winter Street
- Washington Street between Temple Place and Milk Street
- Bromfield Street between Washington Street and Province Street
- Franklin Street between Washington Street and Hawley Street



3. As provided in the Boston Transportation Department Rules and Regulations, vehicles with commercial plates* may park in designated loading zones while actively loading or unloading, for a period of thirty (30) minutes.

4. Vehicles without commercial plates* seeking access to the restricted streets to make deliveries must get a Downtown Crossing Access Permit. This permit gives vehicles the same privileges as if they had commercial plates, which are listed in 1-3 above. It does not exempt any vehicles from the 11AM restriction:

- Applications must indicate why it is not possible to get commercial plates
- Permits will be issued by the Boston Transportation Department, Room 721, City Hall
- Permits will be restricted to two per merchant

5. Vehicles with commercial plates* will be exempt from the 11AM to 6PM restriction ONLY if they have a Downtown Crossing Permit. The permit will be issued in the following situations ONLY:

- Access is needed for an emergency repair which cannot be scheduled before 11AM or after 6PM
- Access is needed for one day special event
- These permits are not a substitute for a street occupancy permit

6. The streets closed at 11AM will be open to the following vehicles after 2PM for deliveries:

- Brinks
- Wells Fargo
- U.S. Mail
- The Boston Globe, The Boston Herald, and The Boston Phoenix

7. The following utilities will be allowed in anytime to respond to an emergency:

- Keyspan
- NStar
- Verizon
- Boston Water and Sewer Commission

8. The following City Department is allowed in anytime:

- Public Works Department

9. The following special services will be allowed into the restricted area to make drop-offs and pick-ups:

- The Ride
- Senior Shuttle

10. Vehicles with HP and V plates may enter solely to pick-up and drop-off. They can park ONLY in spaces designated for HP and V plate parking. These spaces are Temple Place and Franklin Street, or outside the restricted area.

*Any vehicle registered for commercial purposes, bearing commercial vehicle number plates, including trailer or semi-trailer, and designed and used primarily for the transportation or delivery of goods, wares, merchandise or equipment, or designed and used for the delivery of utility services or for field services related to maintenance/repair of buildings.

The vehicle must display permanently painted or sealed/adhered and plainly marked on both sides of the vehicle's body, exclusive of the windows, and on at least three separate lines, the name of the business entity owning or utilizing the vehicle, the full business address, and the telephone number. The name of the business entity must be displayed in letters or numbers a minimum of three (3") inches in height and the full business address and telephone number must be displayed in letters or numbers a minimum of two (2") inches in height. The business entity may substitute its e-mail address or its web site address for the full business address provided that at least three separate lines are used to display the required information. All lettering and numbers shall have a stroke width of at least three-eighths (3/8") of an inch and shall be in a color clearly contrasting with the background color of the vehicle's body and shall be placed on the upper portion of the door panels or the body panels of the vehicle.



Mayor Thomas M. Menino Plans *An Old Fashioned Fourth of July* Celebration for Downtown Crossing

The City of Boston, the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA), and the Downtown Crossing Association are in the process of planning an old fashioned Fourth of July celebration for Downtown Crossing, which will include a bicycle and baby stroller parade, a watermelon eating contest, and the highlight of the celebration will be the crowning of *Little Miss Fourth of July* and *Little Mr. Firecracker*. Winners will receive fabulous prizes.

In preparation for the big event, the Mayor would like property owners and retailers to **SHOW THEIR PATRIOTIC COLORS** – decorate your storefronts with flags, bunting and streamers.

For more information on the Downtown Crossing Economic Improvement Initiative, use the following link:

www.cityofboston.gov/bra/Planning/PlanningInitsIndividual.asp?action=ViewInit&InitID=110



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